**Stratford STEM Magnet High School**

**AP English Language and Composition**

**2011-12 Course Syllabus**

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**Grade:** 11, 12

**Credit:** 1 English III or English IV class credit. Students must sit for the AP English Language and Composition exam. Satisfactory score on AP exam will result in college credit earned where applicable and accepted.

**Course Description**

Registration and entry for this class is based on student interest and teacher recommendation. No student, regardless of past academic performance, has been excluded from registering for this course; additionally, no exclusions have been made based on a student’s race, gender, religious beliefs, and/or disability.

The primary goal of this course is to make students better readers of both prose and drama composed in a wide range of time periods, disciplines, and contexts and better writers of a wide range of text while also widening their cultural and academic knowledge bases. Students will be learning to read and write specifically focusing of a writer’s purpose, intended audience, and the context that surrounds a piece of writing. Peripheral to that focus, students will also be learning to critique and utilize rhetorical strategies, methods of persuasion, creative sentence construction, and various essay organization structures. This course, its requirements, and reading assignments are all similar to an introductory college level composition course which includes analysis, knowledge, and ability to compose narrative, expository, argumentative, and literary analysis pieces of writing.

**Course Outline**

Each unit is comprised of a number of readings which center around a central theme. While focusing on the theme and the accompanying texts as a class we will also be learning about and through different rhetorical strategies, reading strategies, and the writing process as outlined below. Writing assignments for this course will vary in length and method of assessment, meaning that some writing assignments will be on demand (approximately 20 minutes for writing), while others will be written in-class but with a higher level of expectation (approximately 45 minutes for writing); longer writing assignments should take a week to complete as these will ask students to completely work through the writing process. Further details on the different types of writing assignments and the rhetorical and reading strategies which will be used in this class are listed below.

**Description of Writing Assignments**

Each grading quarter will feature a longer piece of writing. These longer pieces of writing are intended to not only introduce students to new ideas about what they’re reading and discussing in class, but also to allow students to progress through the entire writing process and to experiment with various organizational structures and rhetorical strategies. Primarily, students will be responsible for providing feedback and editing one another’s work as the teacher’s role in this course will be to guide students thinking through reading resources, to facilitate discussion among students, and to act as the final arbiter of the work submitted. This means that students must be self motivated and organized in order to best succeed in this course.

Each grading quarter students will be asked to complete at least one major paper related to either a longer piece of writing we are reading or a theme being discussed in the class. These longer papers will require students to work through the writing process, at times with direct guidance from the teacher and at other times with the aid of fellow students. There will be other, shorter essays due along the way which will prepare students for the larger pieces of writing listed above and will give students an opportunity to practice for the AP exam which will require students to write cogent in-class, on demand essays. These shorter pieces will be, but are not limited to, definition essays, documented case study, cause-and-effect essays, a parable, and a satire.

To be clear, these pieces of writing will be assessed as essays worthy of a college composition class. Formal essays should follow English grammar conventions (more focused on format rather than style, no using “I” or “my,” etc.) and be more impersonal in tone while personal essays assigned in the class should demonstrate a facility in style and a comfort with rhetorical decisions.

**Free Write Journals**

As students progress through different texts they will be given short, in-class, on demand writing assignments which should take no longer than twenty minutes to complete. The purpose of these “free write” journals entries will be to give students a space to react to what they’re reading without fear of penalty for organization or even grammar conventions. (A “free write” specific writing rubric will be given to students before their first assignment.) Free writes should be hand written (unless other accommodations have been made) in student composition journals.

**Reaction Journals**

Over the course of a grading quarter students will record a reaction journal. Student reaction journals entries are assigned to provide students with an opportunity to apply the strategies and ideas learned about in class. The primary goal of these journal entries is to help students shape their own style when it comes to written compositions. These journal entries will include a variety of writing prompts including quote reactions, collaborative writing, dialectical journals, and a style notebook(discussed in more detail below) among other prompts. These entries will be of different lengths according to what is fitting of the assignment (for example, quote reactions will need to 300-400 words in length while dialectical journals must only be a minimum of 200 words). Journals entries may be completed in student composition journals or may be completed electronically and submitted via email. Every journal entry will be reviewed by a peer before being submitted to the teacher. Journal entries, like all written submissions for this class, will be assessed using the AP English-Language and Composition Writing Rubric (a copy of this rubric is attached to the syllabus) with special attention paid to the thinking, content, and mechanics components of a student’s writing.

**Learning Strategies**

As the class progresses through different reading materials and encounters new concepts developing students’ vocabularies will become vital; to help with this students will be using a Frayer Model graphic organizer with the terms we encounter. Some of the words we apply this graphic organizer to will be given by the teacher, while others will be completely student generated. The Frayer Model for vocabulary acquisition requires a student to become completely immersed in a term or idea. Students will not only define the term, but they will also be asked to think of the characteristics of the words, to find examples of the word or idea in either our current cultural context or within the context of our class, and to consider non-examples of the word in order that they might better define a term by understanding what it is not.

Additionally, because students will be engaging challenging texts full of new ideas and ways of thinking, students will learn to utilize the SOAPSTone reading strategy provided by the College Board through Springboard instructional materials. Students will also be asked to annotate every piece of text we use in class. By learning to use SOAPSTone and to annotate a given text students will be given useful strategies which will help them with a variety of complex texts.

**Projects**

At times students need an alternative form of assessing to best demonstrate what they’ve learned about an idea; to satisfy this need, quarterly projects will be assigned. Quarterly projects give students another method for expressing what their ideas about a subject or theme. These projects offer students a creative space to apply their thoughts on typically complex ideas. Some quarterly projects will be completed by groups of students (each student in the group having a strict role within the group to ensure accurate assessment), while other projects will be completed by individual students. Each project’s parameters and unique grading rubric (or in some cases, a grading checklist) will be given to students ahead of time along with a detailed description of student roles for group projects.

**Class Discussion**

Class discussion participation is a part of a student’s grade in this course; there is just no way of avoiding it. It is expected that when reading is assigned students will read the piece and be prepared to participate in a meaningful way to class discussions. Class discussions will occur in different contexts though. At times students will be asked to participate in Socratic Seminars, class room debates, and role playing. It is not the desire of the teacher to merely stand and lecture while students ask the occasional clarifying question; in fact, nearly the exact opposite form of classroom discussion is desired. The teacher should be able to pose leading questions which should generate responses and more intelligent questions from the class, but the only way for this type of engagement to occur is for students to read and participate.

**Style Notebook**

One difference between studying literature and studying composition is that students are asked to focus less on what the story is *about* and more on *how* the author told his/her story. This distinction is important because, to a certain degree, it will be expected that students come into the class with the requisite ability to comprehend text on the literal level. Instead, what students will be doing is examining the ways in which writers use language and various rhetorical strategies to accomplish different means. This is why the style notebook is important for this class. As we learn about different rhetorical strategies the style notebook will give students the space to practice using these strategies in their own writing. Students will practice using these strategies by modeling the learned strategies in his/her writing (for example, students will write a short sensory observation piece using repetition in the same way Richard Wright uses repetition in *Black Boy*). Because the intention of this exercise is practice, style notebooks will essentially be assessed in the same way class discussion participation is.

**Major Works Data Sheet**

For every longer piece of writing we read, students will be asked to fill in a graphic organizer designed by Danny Lawrence, an AP English-Literature institute leader. The purpose of this graphic organizer is to give students a clear way of recording major elements of a longer piece of writing. Students will be asked to record historical information surrounding the writing, biographical information about the author, a plot summary, and a record of quotes among other elements of the writing. Once a student has completed this graphic organizer, he/she should have a complete outline of the piece of writing which will allow them an easy way of accessing this important information. These data sheets should be completed by hand, but a student may turn in an electronic version of the sheet if needed.

**Thematic Units**

Taken together all the units for this class seek to answer one overarching question: Why do Americans currently think and/or feel the way they do? As a class we will focus on established cultural norms, current moral debates, marginalized groups of people, and how Americans fit into the world as global citizens. To answer our overarching question our class will be surveying American philosophy and writing through history beginning with the colonial and revolutionary time period, progressing through Transcendentalism and the time period surrounding the American Civil War, and finally through to the modern era, particularly the literature and philosophy surrounding America’s involvement in Vietnam.

**First Quarter:** First part, August 15 – 26

**Theme:** How Do We Talk About Reading, Writing, and Thoughts?

**Rhetorical focus:** (Reading) Aporia, anaphora/epistrophe/symploce, amplification

**Writing focus:** Personal Narrative

**Grammar/Syntax:** Phrases (noun, verb, adjective, adverbial, prepositional); sentence types

**Project:** Portfolio (individual)

**Objective Test:** Rhetorical vocabulary; sentence structure

**Major paper(s):** Autobiography essay; comparison of autobiographies; photo essay

**Major text(s):** *Black Boy*; *The Woman Warrior*

**Supporting texts:**

“Learning to Read”

“The Stranger in the Photo is Me”

“From Realism to Virtual Reality: Images of America’s Wars”

“Once More to the Lake”

“Killing Time in Iraq”

“Richard Wright’s Blues”

“Autobiography as Guided Chinatown Tour? Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* and the Chinese-American Autobiographical Controversy”

Excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

“You Can’t Kill the Rooster”

**First Quarter:** Second part, August 29-October 13

**Theme:** Where does America’s brand of conservatism come from?

**Rhetorical focus:** Aristotelian argumentation; *exordium, narratio, divisio, confirmatio, confutatio, peroratio*

**Writing focus:** Argumentative writing

**Grammar:** Conjunctions and coordination; sentence cohesion

**Project:** Newspaper (group project); public speech (group)

**Objective test:** Clauses; conjunctions; reading analysis

**Major paper(s):** Editorial; public speaking; parable

**Major text(s):** *The Scarlet Letter*

**Supporting texts:**

“Why Colleges Shower Their Students with A’s”

“I Have a Dream”

“Parables of the Kingdom”

“Muddy Road” and other Zen parables

“Of Plymouth Plantation”

“Letters from an American Farmer”

“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”

“On Being Brought From Africa to America” and “Thoughts on the Works of Providence”

“The American Crisis”

“The Devil and Tom Walker”

**Second Quarter:** October 24-December 16

**Theme:** Does the American Civil War still affect us today? (Romanticism and Transcendentalism)

**Rhetorical focus:** (Strategy continued) Distinctio, simile, metaphor, analogy, allusion, eponym, sentenia, exemplum

**Writing Focus:** Analysis

**Grammar:** Branching sentences; sentence openers and inversions

**Project:** Storyboard (group)

**Objective Test:** Sentence branching: modifiers, participles, etc.

**Major paper:** Textual analysis; visual analysis

**Major text(s):** *Killer Angels*; *As I Lay Dying*

**Supporting texts:**

*Gettysburg* (film)

“Self Reliance,” “The Transcendentalist”

*Bartleby, the Scrivener*

Excerpt from *Walden*

“Civil Disobedience”

“Letter from the Birmingham Jail”

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”

“A Rose for Emily”

“Miriam”

Excerpt from *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* and *Member of the Wedding*; “The Twelve Mortal Men”

“The Life You Save May Be Your Own,” “A Good Man is Hard to Find”

*Night of the Hunter* (film); “Knoxville: Summer of 1915”

**Third Quarter:** January 4-March 8

**Theme:** How do Americans think of race?

**Rhetorical Focus:** (Organization) Climax, parallelism/chiasmus, anadiplosis/conduplicatio, metabasis, parenthesis, apostrophe, enumeration, antanagoge

**Writing Focus:** Analysis

**Grammar:** Parallelism

**Project:** Dramatization (group)

**Objective Test:** Identifying sentence structures in context

**Major paper:** Cultural analysis (popular culture); cultural analysis (social practices)

**Major text(s):** *Invisible Man*

**Supporting texts:**

“In the Kitchen”

Excerpts from *The Souls of Black Folks* and *Up From Slavery*

“How It Feels to be Colored Me”

“Cora Unashamed”

Excerpts from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, *Native Son*, and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

“Everybody’s Protest Novel,” “Notes of a Native Son”

“Between Laughter and Tears”

Excerpt from *Song of Solomon*

“Just Walk on By”

“Black is the Noun”

“White Privilege”

**Fourth Quarter:** March 12-May24

**Theme:** Are we living at the end of the American century? (Vietnam conflict to present)

**Rhetorical Focus: (**Analysis of style) epithet; asyndeton/polysyndeton; zeugma; synecdoche/metonymy; hyperbaton

**Writing Focus:** Descriptive essay; expository essay

**Grammar:** Using the types of sentences

**Project:** Panel discussion (group); soliloquy; mapmaking (group)

**Major Paper:** Profile of a place; profile of a person; synthesis essay (one completed outside of class and one completed on demand in-class); documented research paper

**Major text(s):** *The Namesake*; *The Farming of Bones*

**Supporting texts:**

“Yeager”

“An American Childhood”

“Under the Influence”

*The Things They Carried*

*Maus*

“Green Cards”

“Enclosed. Encyclopedic. Endured: The Mall of America”

“True North”

**Standards (adapted from College Board Standards for College Success)**

By completing this course it will be expected that students will be able to:

* Use their knowledge of Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, suffixes, and cognate words from foreign languages to determine meaning and enhance understanding.
* Analyze and evaluate a writer’s use of literary elements (setting, plot construction, characterization, point-of-view).
* Analyze the organizational patterns, textual features, graphical representations, and ideas presented in complex texts.
* Draw on relevant personal experiences while reading pieces of writing both longer and shorter in pagination.
* Evaluate images as texts.
* Utilize reading strategies when confronted with challenging texts.
* Write for a variety of purposes (expository, analytical, and argumentative) while taking audience and genre into account.
* Incorporate primary and secondary sources into their writing where appropriate.
* Compose pieces of writing, regardless of purpose, complete with stylistic choices and an awareness of suitable and effective organizational structures.
* Evaluate text for a writer’s style choices and effectiveness of rhetorical strategies
* Progress through the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, editing, revision, and publishing) paying special attention to his or her development, focus, and use of ideas

**Textbooks (provided by school)**

Peterson, Linda H., and John C. Brereton, eds. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A., and John Ruszkiewicz. *Everything’s an Argument*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2009. Print.

**Outside Reading\***

Danticat, Edwidge. *The Farming of Bones*. London: Penguin, 1999. Print.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Vintage, 1995. Print.

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*. Ed. Michael Gorra. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009. Print.

Hawthrone, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. Ed. Leland S. Person. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. Print.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior*. New York: Vintage, 1989. Print.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*. New York: Mariner Books, 2004. Print.

Shaara, Michael. *The Killer Angels: A Novel of the Civil War*. New York: Modern Library, 2004. Print.

Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2006. Print.

\*These books should be purchased by the student. It is expected that students will be annotating these books with blue or black ink. A student may buy all these books for as little as $2.00 on Amazon.com. (The teacher may assist students in purchasing books from a website.) The editions listed above are the ones used by the teacher; other editions may be purchased.

**Recommended Text (a great resource for a writer of any age)**

Tufte, Virginia. *Artful Sentences: Syntax as Style*. Cheshire, Connecticut: Graphics Press LLC, 2006. Print.

**Required Materials (things students need to bring to class every day)**

Ink pens (one blue or black ink pen and one red ink pen)

Number two pencils for tests

Composition books (to be provided by the teacher)

Loose leaf paper

**Grading**

Quarter grades will consist of a combination of written assignments, projects, tests, quizzes, in-class work, homework, and participation. Larger written compositions, tests, and projects are weighted differently from in-class work and homework. The weights of these various assessments are outlined below.

Quarter writing assignments, test, projects: 60%

Quizzes, in-class work, etc.: 30%

Homework, participation: 10%

**Grading Policy**

Attendance will be very important for insuring a student’s success in this class. Attendance policies for this class are the same as those governing Stratford STEM Magnet High School and the Metro Nashville Public School system. Any exceptions to these rules must be directed by a school administrator.

All work must be turned in on the day assigned for completion. Late work will be accepted with a letter grade penalty for each day late. Assignments may be turned in electronically without penalty (assuming it is on time) unless otherwise stipulated. If a student cannot turn in an assignment because of an excused absence (as outlined by the school and the district’s attendance policy), additional time will be granted.

All make-up tests and quizzes must be made up either after school or during Saturday school. In either case, the student must set up a time with the teacher and a parent/guardian before the make-up date.

All work must be turned in, even if the grade given will be a failing grade due to lateness. If at the end of a quarter there is work yet to be submitted a grade of “I” (incomplete) will be given. The grade of “I” will be turned into an “F” if no work is turned in within the week following the end of a grading quarter.

Getting a satisfactory score on the final AP exam is not directly tied to a student’s gaining credit for this course. That is to say that it is possible for a student to pass this class while scoring relatively low on the AP exam. The reverse should obviously be true also; a student who has a strong classroom grade going into the AP exam should feel prepared for the rigor of the exam and thus should do well.

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this class without exception. If the teacher suspects a student is guilty of academic dishonesty (cheating on a test, plagiarism, etc.) the student, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), and administration will be alerted to the situation. The student will have an opportunity to defend his/her work, but the ultimate decision in such matters rests with the teacher. Any assignment found to be a product of academic dishonesty will be a score of “0” without any chance of make-up.

**Grading Scale**

The following grading scale is applicable for this course only. It does not apply to any other course taught at Stratford STEM Magnet High School.

A 100-93

B 92-85

C 84-75

D 74-70

F 69-60\*

\*The lowest grade a student may receive for completed, independently created work is a 60. A zero is reserved for works involving academic dishonesty.

**Student-Parent Review Requirement**

After you have reviewed this course description with at least one parent, both you and your parent must sign below, acknowledging that each of you understand and accept the challenges and demands of English III Advanced Placement Language and Composition.

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed and Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Keep the Course Description for easy reference at home.**

**Return only this signed page to the instructor.**